

Internazionali BNL d'Italia

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Roma, Italia

Novak Djokovic

Press Conference

N. DJOKOVIC/C. Norrie

6-3, 6-4

THE MODERATOR: Novak, well done extending your quarterfinals streak. You're very consistent at every event. Does this number impress you here in Rome, 17 consecutive?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, I am definitely pleased with my results historically here in Rome. It's one of my best tournaments, most consistent tournaments, on all surfaces. I won the tournament quite a few times and played a lot of finals or semifinals, quarterfinals at least in the 17 years, which is amazing that I've been coming to Rome.

It's kind of historically the tournament that I haven't been missing because I just love playing here. I love being in Rome. I have a lot of supporters. Good energy.

I think it comes for me exactly at the right time as a tournament where I'm able to raise and kind of elevate the level and quality of my tennis so that I can set the right form and the right tone for Roland Garros.

I'm really glad to reach other quarterfinals.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Rune tomorrow. What do you make of his game and his attitude on the court?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: We played only once. We practiced quite a few times, but we played only once. I lost to him in Paris Bercy finals in a really close match, tough match.

Even though he's really young, I know his game quite well. He's been on the tour now for last few years playing some great tennis, particularly in the last I would say six to eight months. He's been really establishing himself as a top player. He's a top-10 player, deservedly so. He's been playing some really high-quality tennis.

He's one of the hardest workers out there. Nice guy. I get along well with him. On the court obviously we certainly



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want to win against each other.

He kind of reminds me a little bit, the way he plays. Really fit physically, great defense, but also great counter-puncher. He can hurt you from both forehand and backhand side. Really solid serve. Aggressive returns. Just all-around player on all surfaces. Particularly on clay I think he finds himself really comfortable playing. He played finals of Monaco, was really close to win the title there.

He's in very good form and I look forward to a challenge. I think it's going to be a very physical match.

Q. The ATP announced from 2025 there's going to be electric line calling on all tournaments. Especially on a surface where there's a lot of mark checking and arguments... Also does it feel different playing on a court with fewer people like this?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Obviously we pride ourselves in tennis that we maintain the tradition and culture and history. This is one of the things that has been there forever, the line umpires. Of course it's not an easy change for a lot of people to accept because they're part of the game, they're part of the sport. We are so used to having line umpires.

I think it's one of these things that I think it's a good decision because technological advancements have improved so much in the last decade or so. We probably won't have the drama that I think people like to see sometimes, especially on clay, arguing with the umpires of whether the ball was in or out, looking at the mark, having the crowd get into it. There is this element, as well, of I would say interest that that drama is generating in people and viewership.

Of course, from that point of view we're going to miss that, but at the same time I think we're going to decrease the possibilities of errors, I mean, fully. Of course technology can be wrong as well, but 1 % or 2%, if so. You can't argue with that once you see it on the screen.

Yeah, I think it's a good decision. It's the right direction to move into when it comes to that. I'm not supportive of technology taking over everything, but in this direction I'm supportive of that.

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Q. You were a bit delayed at the start of the game because it seems you've been in the treatment room. Is there a physical issue for you? Could you talk a little bit about that?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: Well, yes, I had something, but don't want to talk about that too much.

We had a late warmup today. The courts, practice courts, there were only two practice courts available to practice for so many players. It was not an ideal preparation for the match. I finished my warmup 10 minutes before the match. It was cold. Try to do everything in time. That's it.

I got the permission from supervisor to have an extra seven, eight minutes, and that's all it was.

Q. You seemed quite angry with Cameron when he hit you. Do you think he did it deliberately? Were you upset that he took that medical timeout when you were about to serve out the match?

NOVAK DJOKOVIC: I did watch the replay when he hit me. Yeah, maybe you could say he didn't hit me deliberately. I don't know if he saw me. I mean, peripherally [sic] you can always see where the player is positioned on the court. The ball was super slow and super close to the net. I just turned around because the point was over for me.

It was not so much maybe about that, but it was maybe a combination of things. From the very beginning, I don't know, he was doing all the things that were allowed. He's allowed to take a medical timeout. He's allowed to hit a player. He's allowed to say C'mon in the face more or less every single point from basically first game.

Those are the things that we players know in the locker room it's not fair play, it's not how we treat each other. But, again, it's allowed, so...

I got along with Cameron really well all these years that he's been on the tour. Practiced with each other. He's very nice guy off the court, so I don't understand this kind of attitude on the court, to be honest.

But it is what it is. He brought the fire, and I responded to that. I'm not going to allow someone behaving like this just bending my head. I'm going to respond to that.

That's all it is. What happens on the court, we leave it on the court, and we move on.

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